FAA and Industry Guide to Product Certification

Gilbert L. Thompson

Manager, Los Angeles Aircraft Certification Office

FAA/AIA/GAMA Certification Process Improvement Team

- U.S. Industry/FAA working together to improve process for Certification, Production and COSP
- FAA commitment at all Directorates
- *FAA and Industry Guide to Product Certification*:
    - Early closure of certification basis
    - Agreement on delegation plan, conformity process, COSP plan, and roles and responsibilities
    - FAA/company partnership agreement
    - FAA/project specific partnership agreement

Purpose of the Guide

- How to define & document an effective/efficient product certification process between the FAA and applicant
- Establish a clear understanding of the needs and expectations of both parties
- Reduce cycle time to certificate a product
- Ensure regulatory compliance
- Require earlier FAA involvement with applicants in project planning

GOALS - Cooperative partnership between FAA and applicant's Leadership and Team Players

- Safety
- Teamwork
- Communication
- Planning for success
- Quality products and services
- Accountability at all levels

Vision

- Timely and efficient product type design and production approval
- Clearly defined and understood roles, responsibilities, and accountability of all stakeholders
- Timely Identification and resolution of:
  - the certification basis;
  - potential safety issues;
  - business practice requirements
- Optimal delegation using safety management concepts with appropriate controls and oversight

Six Phases of Product Certification

- Partnership for Safety Plan phase
- Conceptual design & standards phase
- Refined product definition & risk management phase
- Certification project planning phase
- Certification project management phase
- Post certification activities phase

Two Major Elements

Partnership for Safety Plan

- Between applicant & FAA
- Written agreement for early familiarization & planning
- Establishes expectations, operating norms & deliverables
- Defines discipline & methodology
- Company/FAA commitment

Product Specific Certification Plan

- Developed for the conduct of each certification plan
- In concert with the Partnership for Safety Plan
- Used as a project management tool
- Would contain specific project procedures for delegation, conformity, issue resolution, etc.
- Program/FAA commitment

Key Players - Key Principles

- ALL STAKEHOLDERS PARTICIPATE
- Desired results - Win-Win Partnership
- Guidelines - Partnership for Safety Plan
- Resources - Project Specific Certification Plan
- Accountability - Project Specific Certification Plan
- Consequences - mutual interdependence

NEXT STEPS

- Finalize FAA & Industry Guide - February 1999
- 75% of ACOs implement a PSP with a targeted Industry partner in FY99
- Expand to additional Industry partners
- Continuous feedback and improvement
- Success is in the journey, not arrival at the destination

CERTIFICATION PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

- FAA/Industry Partnerships for Safety
- Business Planning Focus
- Budget/Resource Utilization
- Leveraged Use of Delegation
- Role of Designees in facilitating "win-win" programs